CONCLUSION

No history can be completed without knowing its socio-cultural aspects. By following this principle, the socio-cultural aspect of the Kalhaṇa’s chronicle has been explored. Kalhaṇa very beautifully has depicted the life of Kashmiri people. The eight taraṅgas of the chronicle which deal with the history of the Kashmir give the accurate picture of society and culture. There are comprehensive and authentic details about family setup, caste-system, position of women, economic life and different schools of religious and philosophy, literature etc.

During my research I noticed that Kalhaṇa has firsthand knowledge about the socio-cultural life of Kashmiri people. He has given numerous realistic pictures of human relations and human feelings and thoughts. He has given ample references to relate topics, through which we can portray a picture of contemporary society and its culture.

Through the micro study of socio-cultural life during the period of study one can easily see the recent changes, the society has gone through and it can be clearly seen only when the contemporary society will be compared to other periods of history. By doing this I have tried to draw a fair picture of the socio-cultural changes in Kashmir from time to time, which further helped to analyse and to reach on some conclusions, about an overall socio-cultural picture of Kashmir through the ages. For example, during the period of study the position of women in other parts of country was deteriorating continuously. But in Kashmir, Kalhaṇa has given far better position of Kashmiri women.

It was the main objective of this research to get the maximum information related to the socio-cultural life of the contemporary Kashmir, that too in contrast with the rest of the country during the period of our study and it was aimed to see if the socio-cultural conditions of Kashmir were different
from the rest of the country or they formed a part of the main stream of rest of India.

The standard of life of the people of ancient Kashmir seems to have been fairly high and in no way inferior to people living in the rest of India. For, it is only in congenial social and economic environments that the arts of peace can flourish. Through the study of different Tarāṅgas of Rājatarāṅginī and with some information from the archaeological remains, we can connect account regarding the day to-day life of early Kashmir may be formed by weaving these scattered threads into a single texture. We can say that society of ancient Kashmir was an open-minded, liberal and humane society, culturally advanced, intellectually ablest and aesthetically conscious.

The Kashmir architects were master in their skill of building. One thing always surprise that how in those ancient days massive stones were lifted and laid in position with great precision on the heights of the temples. But Kashmir people appear to have known the science and laws of mechanics then, as they used yantras or machines, in lifting up enormously bulky and heavy stones.

Right from the beginning, Kashmir has been a centre of teaching and learning. No scholar would be considered experienced and perfect without learning from known scholars in Kashmir. For centuries there has been honour and respect for education in Kashmir. Thus we can say that Kashmir has produced a galaxy of poets and dramatists in Sanskrit. Influenced by the natural beauty of their homeland, its lofty mountains, lakes, waterfalls and charming flowers of multitudinous colours, they wrote dramas, epics, lyrical as well as dialectical poems, essays, fiction and anthologies. That’s why the learned pandits of Kashmir and their works were in demand at the courts of several enlightened princes of India, at important assemblies of thinkers and writers and at the Sanskrit universities in the rest of India. It was the ambition of every student and lover of Sanskrit language, literature and Indian philosophy to go to Kashmir to drink deep at the fountain of knowledge and wisdom. Thus it can
be rightly said that like its scenic beauty, Kashmir valley is even famous for its cultural and religious heritage. The valley of Kashmir is very rich as far as different aspects of its religion are concerned. Right through ages, it has adopted and assimilated components of various civilizations and religions. The amalgamation of Hindu, Muslim and Buddhist philosophies has added colour and fragrance to the Kashmir culture resulting into a composite culture based on humanism, secularism and tolerance. Besides, it has borrowed certain features from its adjacent regions like Central Asia.

Regarding the structure of the society it is concluded that caste furnished an additional incentive to that functional organization and self-government which are natural to all economic occupations, especially to industry and commerce. In such a community social control could not be concentrated at a single point. It was pluralistic and was diffused among a variety of groups and associations. So, it is believed that the caste system in the society of ancient Kashmir was not so rigid as in other parts of country by that time. We even find men and women of the low-caste occupying positions of responsibility. Under Cakravarman the Ḍombaś practically held all the important posts in the court and two Ḍomba women became the King’s favorite queens. We also get few references related to slavery in the society of Kashmir. That seems to have prevailed as elsewhere in the country.

So at last it can be concluded that Kalhana in his chronicle, not only gives the fair picture of the political history of Kashmir, for which it was Known till time, but has also depicted very beautifully the day to day life of the people of the contemporary people. He narrates that the society of Kashmir was also going through changes like other parts of the country. Like a true intellectual he has praised as well as criticized certain incidents. The period of the study is very important period not only for Kashmir but for Indian history. It was that transitional period when old Hindu rule was coming to an end and medieval period known to be as Muslim period began after some time. This
period saw changes not only in political field but also those changes which affected the life of common man. The study has certainly made our understanding of early medieval Kashmir much better than it was, as no scholar had taken up such a study at micro level.